

## **IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1, 5, 7, and 10 as shown below, in which deleted terms are indicated with strikethrough and/or double brackets, and added terms are indicated with underscoring.

Please cancel claims 3, 8, and 13-16 without prejudice and without abandonment of the subject matter thereof. Please add new claims 18 and 19. The following list of claims replaces all previous versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended) An electronic key system for a vehicle including a controller mounted in the vehicle and a portable transceiver carried by a user of the vehicle,

the vehicle comprising a locking unit which locks the vehicle so that use of the vehicle is not possible until a lock release command is received, and

wherein the controller comprises:

a transmission circuit that outputs a request signal to the portable transceiver;

a receiving circuit that receives ~~a request~~ an acknowledgement signal from the portable transceiver;

a transmitter that outputs the request signal via the transmission circuit to the portable transceiver in response to an ON operation of a ~~predetermined~~ switch which detects when the user has boarded the vehicle ~~via the transmission circuit, the predetermined switch being previously determined from among a plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user when the user boards the vehicle;~~

a receiver which receives ~~an~~ the acknowledgement signal via the receiving circuit, the acknowledgement signal being outputted from the portable transceiver in response to the request signal from the transmitter,

a drive unit which, when the acknowledgement signal is compared and judged to be a request from the user, outputs a lock release command to the locking unit;

an interrupting unit which interrupts, if the vehicle is not started for a specified period of time, a supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit inside the controller; and

an interrupting unit controller which permits a switching unit to supply power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit in response to an ON operation of the ~~predetermined switch among the plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user when the user boards the vehicle.~~

2-4. (Canceled).

5. (Currently amended) An electronic key system for a vehicle comprising a controller mounted in the vehicle and a portable transmitter carried by a user of the vehicle,

the vehicle containing a locking unit which locks the vehicle so that the vehicle cannot be used until a lock release command is received,

the portable transmitter comprising a transmitter unit that outputs a request signal to the controller in response to an operation input by the user, and

wherein the controller comprises:

a receiving circuit that receives ~~a~~ the request signal from the portable transmitter;

a receiver which receives via the receiving circuit the request signal from the portable transmitter in response to an ON operation of a ~~predetermined switch~~ which detects that the user has boarded the vehicle ~~via the receiving circuit, the predetermined switch being previously~~

~~identified from among a plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user when the user boards the vehicle;~~

a drive unit which outputs a lock release command to the locking unit when the request signal is compared and judged to be a request from the user;

an interrupting unit which interrupts, if the vehicle is not started for a specified period of time, a supply of power to the receiving circuit inside the controller; and

an interrupting unit controller which permits the interrupting unit to provide power to the receiving circuit in response to an ON operation of the ~~predetermined switch among the plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user when the user boards the vehicle,~~

~~—wherein a switch for detecting that the user has boarded the vehicle is included as one of the plurality of switches.~~

6. (Canceled).

7. (Currently amended) An electronic key system for a vehicle comprising a controller mounted in the vehicle and a portable transmitter carried by a user of the vehicle,

the vehicle containing a locking unit which locks the vehicle so that the vehicle cannot be used until a lock release command is received,

the portable transmitter comprising a transmitter unit that outputs a request signal to the controller in response to operation input by the user, and

wherein the controller comprises:

a receiving circuit that receives ~~a~~ the request signal from the portable transmitter;

a receiver which receives via the receiving circuit the request signal from the portable

transmitter in response to an ON operation of a ~~predetermined~~ switch which detects that the user has boarded the vehicle ~~via the receiving circuit, the predetermined switch being previously identified from among a plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user when the user boards the vehicle;~~

a drive unit which outputs a lock release command to the locking unit when the request signal is compared and judged to be a request from the user;

a switching unit which permits an intermittent supply of power to be provided to the receiving circuit inside the controller if the vehicle is not started for a predetermined period of time; and

a switching unit controller which permits the switching unit to provide a normal supply of power to the receiving circuit in response to ON operation of the ~~predetermined~~ switch ~~when the user boards the vehicle;~~

—— ~~wherein a switch for detecting that the user has boarded the vehicle is included as one of the plurality of switches.~~

8-9. (Canceled).

10. (Currently amended) An electronic key system for a vehicle including a controller mounted in the vehicle and a portable transceiver carried by a user of the vehicle,

the vehicle comprising a locking unit which locks the vehicle so that use of the vehicle is not possible until a lock release command is received, and

wherein the controller comprises:

a transmission circuit that outputs a request signal to the portable transceiver;

a receiving circuit that receives ~~a request~~ an acknowledgement signal from the portable transceiver;

a transmitter that outputs the request signal via the transmission circuit to the portable transceiver in response to an ON operation of a switch ~~via the transmission circuit~~, the switch ~~being selectable from among a plurality of switches positioned in the vicinity of the user~~ detecting when the user boards the vehicle;

a receiver which receives ~~an~~ the acknowledgement signal via the receiving circuit, the acknowledgement signal being outputted from the portable transceiver in response to the request signal from the transmitter;

a drive unit which, when the acknowledgement signal is compared and judged to be a request from the user, outputs a lock release command to the locking unit;

an interrupting unit which prevents, if the vehicle is not started for a specified period of time, the supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit, inside the controller; and

an interrupting unit controller which permits the interrupting unit to provide power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit in response to an ON operation of the switch ~~when the user boards the vehicle~~;

~~wherein a switch for detecting that the user has boarded the vehicle is included as one of the plurality of switches.~~

11. (Canceled).

12. (Previously presented) The electronic key system for a vehicle according to claim 10, further

comprising:

a switching unit which permits an intermittent supply of power to be provided to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit, inside the controller, that perform communication if the vehicle is not started for a specified period of time; and

a switching unit controller which permits the switching unit to provide a normal supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit in response to the ON operation of the switch when the user boards the vehicle.

13-17. (Canceled).

18. (New) The electronic key system for a vehicle according to claim 5, further comprising:

a switching unit configured to interrupt a supply of power to the transmission circuit and receiving circuit,

a switching unit controller which permits the switching unit to provide

a normal supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit in response to the ON operation of the switch when the user boards the vehicle,

a normal supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit for a specified period of time if the vehicle is turned off ,

no power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit for an indefinite period of time after the specified period of time has elapsed.

19. (New) The electronic key system for a vehicle according to claim 7, further comprising:

a switching unit configured to interrupt a supply of power to the transmission circuit and receiving circuit,

a switching unit controller which permits the switching unit to provide

a normal supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit in response to the ON operation of the switch when the user boards the vehicle,

a normal supply of power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit for a specified period of time if the vehicle is turned off ,

no power to the transmission circuit and the receiving circuit for an indefinite period of time after the specified period of time has elapsed.